# Chapter 4:

# Planning Golden Gate National Recreation Area: How to Build an Urban Park

The evolution of planning at Golden Gate NRA followed a clear and distinct process. The agency assessed the viability of existing policy, adapting standards to the realities of the energized Bay Area community. The Park Service also responded to actions or activities by the public for which the agency had no existing policy or practice. It also learned a cooperative pattern, engaging in joint endeavors with its advisory commission and devising other tactics and programs that helped the agency take the pulse of the public and incorporate its views into policy and practice. Utilizing this essentially reactive pattern, the agency was able to invent a new set of practices that adhered to agency standards and reflected the new realities of urban national park areas with complicated constituencies.

William Whalen liked to say that planning began the first day he visited Golden Gate National Recreation Area. While Whalen certainly began crafting a vision that December day in 1972, comprehensive planning took a great deal more time to take shape. Initially, the Park Service was on the defensive in the Bay Area. Other than Muir Woods National Monument and Point Reyes National Seashore, its prior presence in the region had been limited to the Western Regional Office, established in 1935, but without a major national park in the vicinity, the Park Service was overshadowed by other federal agencies, most prominently the military. In 1964, the establishment of John Muir National Historic Site, followed in 1976 by Eugene O'Neill National Historic Site lessened that trend, but as long as the Regional Office was its primary presence, the agency had little need for knowledge of local politics, alliances, and its constituencies. After the establishment of the new park, the Park Service faced a plethora of users who felt a proprietary interest in the new park and found itself at a severe disadvantage. Before the area was added to the national park system, these users engaged in activities that they felt were justified and protected in law. To make the area into a national park sometimes required that the Park Service change such patterns, almost always inspiring outrage. When that happened, these citizens of a fractious but open metropolitan area, where it was easier to get a hearing for any point of view than in many other communities, argued their case loudly and vociferously. They marshaled whatever influence they could and took on the agency and its representatives. For the better part of the 1970s, the Park Service posture at Golden Gate National Recreation Area dealt with such challenges. People brought their issues to the park and staff responded on a case-by-case basis. While this did not always meet the post-National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 standards for federal decision-making, this mode was a necessary phase in developing park planning. It allowed planners to build toward larger integrated goals with a set of checks and balances that simultaneously explained to the public that the agency had a different mission than previous managers and it needed to eliminate some uses while keeping its options open.

Golden Gate National Recreation Area enjoyed another unusual mandate in its establishing legislation. Advisory committees of various kinds were common in the national park system, but mostly these were appointed by the Secretary of the Interior. In the confrontational climate of the 1960s and early 1970s, opponents caustically referred to such organizations as

"captives." At Phil Burton's behest, the park established a Citizen's Advisory Commission (CAC), to which the Secretary of the Interior made appointments. Point Reyes National Seashore, which did not previously have an advisory commission, a source of consternation for advocates of that park, was also included in the legislation. The clause did not mandate specific actions, giving no real form to the concept of citizen participation. As the Golden Gate National Recreation Area bill made its way through the House and Senate, the question of the committee's composition became an issue. Local activists wanted more control over the appointment process. Still the Park Service and Secretary of the Interior Rogers C. B. Morton remained uncomfortable with the idea of an advisory commission. Activists thought such a commission essential and pushed hard for its implementation. "Within two years, we would have had to invent [a commission] because there's no way this park was going to survive without one," Amy Meyer asserted in 2002. "It's unimaginable to have Golden Gate without one." After the park establishment bill became law, Whalen was left to sort out the recalcitrance of the government and the enthusiasm of the activists. Whalen regarded citizen involvement as a tremendous advantage for the park and from its inception, the advisory commission played an important role. Whalen intended to "nurture to and refine" the commission, allowing it to serve as liaison between the park, its planners, and Bay Area communities.[180]

The Citizens' Advisory Commission slowly took shape. Although Edgar Wayburn and others instrumental in establishing the park were contacted about recommending nominees for the commission, during the first year of the park's existence, no one was appointed to any of the commission's fifteen seats. Many of the activists who helped found the park were bemused, befuddled, mistrustful, or angry. They thought that government officials purposely slowed the creation of the commission. On October 27, 1973, the first anniversary of the founding of Golden Gate National Recreation Area, conservationists in Marin County and San Francisco voiced their complaints about the slow process. National Park Service Director Ronald Walker promised "imminent" appointments, but the locals expressed incredulity and loud disbelief. "I was told that in November of last year," Robert F. Raab, president of the Marin Conservation League, vehemently retorted. "I just can't figure out why it would take a year to appoint fifteen people. There [are] a veritable plethora of qualified people in Marin and San Francisco and the Bay Area." Amy Meyer, the driving force behind the park, described herself as "furious" at the inaction. The very people Whalen hoped to include were livid. They felt excluded from the park they had helped create.[181]

Trying to turn animosity into action, Whalen began to build bridges to the people who would become the CAC. For leadership, the commission turned to the military. Frank Boerger, a retired army colonel and engineer, was chosen by the board to head the committee. "We were in absolutely unknown territory," Boerger remembered of the early days of the committee in 1974.

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[180] John A. Godino, "Changing Tides at the Golden Gate: Management Policies of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and the Role of the National Park Service in Urban America," (M.A. thesis, University of California, Santa Cruz, 1988), 32-36; Mrs. Stuart H. (Katy) Johnson to Phillip Burton, June 15, 1972, PFGGNRA I, Box 17, Projects – Citizens Advisory Commission Establishment; Amy Meyer, interview with Stephen Haller, February 25, 2002, 10-11, gives the genesis of the idea as coming from PFGGNRA.

[181] Scott Thurber, "GGNRA Advisory Board: What Advisory Board?" *PS*, November 8-14, 1973, 1- 2; Howard H. Chapman to Edgar Wayburn, May 1973, PFGGNRA I, Box 17, Projects – Citizens Advisory Commission Establishment; Judith Weston, "Legislation Forming Citizens Advisory Committee for New Park and Seashore Being Pigeonholed," *PRL*, September 9, 1973.

"No one, including the park, knew what an advisory commission was supposed to do." The commission reflected the breadth of the Bay Area. The Secretary of the Interior appointed five members, including Boerger, while PFGGNRA chose five more. Three of PFGGNRA's five had to be members of minority groups. San Francisco and Marin County each appointed two representatives, the Association of Bay Area Governments held one seat, and the East Bay Regional Parks selected the final representative.[182] The remarkable caveat in the legislation that granted a private organization control of one-third of the board appointments revealed much about power and to a lesser degree, patronage at Golden Gate National Recreation Area.

Two years after the park's establishment, the role of the CAC remained undefined, in no small part as a result of NPS reticence. Park Service officials were still not sure what to make of the new commission. Although "Phil Burton attended our second meeting in 1974," Commissioner Richard Bartke remembered, "and gave us our goal 'to give advice to the Secretary of the Interior, and to be the eyes and ears of Congress,'" the NPS remained reticent. Officials may have feared politicized local involvement and special interest pressure and a glance at politics in the Bay Area could easily confirm such fears. The Park Service had come through an era of turmoil; first its always dependable friends, such as the National Parks Association, which became the National Parks and Conservation Association in 1970, had become critical of the agency and its policies and goals. The appointment of Ronald Walker to lead the Park Service after George B. Hartzog Jr. was forced out at the insistence of presidential friend Charles "Bebe" Rebozo politicized the directorship; Walker had been an advance man in Richard M. Nixon's reelection campaign and had no previous park experience. The long tradition of rising through the ranks and earning the directorship came to an end, leaving a momentarily timid agency short of leadership and in disarray. In this climate, the agency was unlikely to encourage local groups to claim a larger part of decision-making power.[183]

Once the appointments came through and Boerger took the lead, the advisory committee moved quickly. More than its enemies the Park Service seemed to fear its friends. For activists such as Amy Meyer, this was a daunting and problematic situation. If the agency did not trust its supporters, then the commission could be little more than window dressing. Meyer aggressively shaped the commission, sometimes surprising other commissioners. Whalen's integrity saved the situation. The superintendent was skilled at managing constituencies and practiced at the fine art of negotiation. He did not want "a rubber stamp," instead seeing the advisory committee as an important liaison between the park and its many and vocal constituencies. Activists on the commission agreed with this perspective and Boerger and Richard H. Bartke, the retired mayor of El Cerrito, one of Boerger's successors, were "just relaxed good chairmen," in Amy Meyer's observation, who listened to people and solved issues. From Whalen's point of view, the

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[182] Godino, "Changing Tides at the Golden Gate," 37-38; interestingly, the appointments inspired some controversy. From the Board of Supervisors, Dianne Feinstein sought to appoint Amy Meyer to one of the San Francisco seats. As the head of PFGGNRA, Meyer took one of its two undesignated seats; see Dianne Feinstein to Ronald Pelosi, May 10, 1973, PFGGNRA I, Box 10, San Francisco Government – Board of Supervisors.

[183] William C. Everhart, *The National Park Service* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1983), 149-51; John C. Miles, *Guardians of the Parks: A History of the National Parks and Conservation Association* (Washington, D.C: Taylor & Francis, 1995), 237-48. Whalen's appointment as director in 1977 returned the Park Service to career officials, albeit one with a comparatively short tenure. Whalen's successor, Russell Dickenson came from the NPS mold; he first joined the agency in 1935, reaching the directorship in 1980. After Dickenson's retirement, three successive directors came from outside the agency. The appointment of Robert Stanton in 1996 returned the directorship to career official.

commission was an important part of the solution to local problems rather than one of the causes. Chafing to contribute, the CAC embraced Whalen's vision and quickly established a consensus about the group's mission. "Our task was to inspire the public to want to come," Boerger recalled, and with the finely tuned instincts of Amy Meyer and Edgar Wayburn on the board, it served a broader function over time. [184]

The Citizens' Advisory Commission established its own direction and throughout the 1970s played a significant role in forming park policy. Among its important innovations was the creation of the Fort Mason Foundation, an umbrella organization that administered many of the historic properties at Fort Mason for community purposes. The CAC also played a significant part in the development of park planning. Boerger retained independence for the commission, helped shape Park Service policy at Golden Gate National Recreation Area. "We respect regulations," Boerger allowed, "but we don't always agree with them. When we don't, we say so." This ability to be critical has yielded important benefits. In every case that the CAC made recommendations different from those of the Park Service, the park accepted the commission's suggestions. The result was a close partnership, replete with mutual respect.[185]

The partnership worked well throughout the 1970s as the CAC functioned as an important part of the planning process. With Golden Gate National Recreation Area's first General Management Plan (GMP), which debuted in draft form in 1979, looming in front of the agency, the CAC took on the responsibility for providing community input. Especially in the highly charged Bay Area, a direct forum for community participation and a filter for the points of view of many constituencies was essential in negotiating the pitfalls of local politics. Even after he left San Francisco for the director's chair in Washington, D.C., Whalen recognized and appreciated the significance of the commission. Three years of overseeing the complicated relationships between parks and their many publics throughout the nation made Whalen appreciate the CAC. "We need a citizens' commission to run interference for the bureaucracy," he told Frank Boerger in 1979, "and also to be a listening post and advisor." The CAC at Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Whalen had come to believe, could serve as model for park-public cooperation at a number of the new parks he now oversaw.[186]

Even as the CAC developed its point of view, Whalen faced a mighty task at Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The initiation of planning at the Bay Area park stretched agency resources. Although the Park Service contained an impressive planning division, the experience of agency planners came from more traditional park areas. Since the 1930s, the agency developed master plans for parks, but generally, they followed the model of remote national parks. The nature of Golden Gate National Recreation Area more closely mirrored the holdings of state and city parks than prior national park areas. Conventional agency planning seemed misdirected at Golden Gate National Recreation Area, a sentiment that Whalen felt. Douglas Cornell, who led the Bay Area planning effort from the San Francisco Office, which became the Denver Service Center in 1972, showed the new superintendent around the park as 1972 ended, led the initial planning team. Whalen quickly became dissatisfied; Cornell, in his estimation,

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[184] Godino, "Changing Tides at Golden Gate," 39; Amy Meyer interview, February 25, 2002, 10, 15.

[185] Godino, "Changing Tides at Golden Gate," 39.

[186] William Whalen to Frank Boerger, January 5, 1979, PFGGNRA I, Box 7, Federal Government, NPS – Office of the Director.

"had his mind made up the way things were gonna be, and didn't want to listen to the people." Sensitive to the need for strong local support and already in the process of developing ties to San Francisco Mayor Joseph Alioto's office and his parks department, headed by Joseph Caverly, Whalen recognized that his planners had to hear the voices of the public in a way that few NPS planners ever before had. He dismissed Cornell and assembled a new team.[187]

Prominent among the new Golden Gate National Recreation Area planners were Doug Nadeau and Ron Treabess. Nadeau arrived in 1974 from the Park Service's Denver Service Center as Planning Coordinator. A landscape architect by training, he had been selected to play the lead role in the development of a general management plan, a primary administrative document, for the park. Until the 1970s, general management plans and their predecessors, park master plans, were typically in-house projects, debuted to the public when completely finished. The tenor of the 1970s made such a strategy undesirable. Following the environmental revolution of the late 1960s, the Park Service faced a public that frequently sought to influence agency policy. Often public sentiments confounded the agency; the public knew what it wanted, but advocates rarely grasped policy goals, statutory obligations, and other constraints. The result was a decade in which the friends of the Park Service attacked it with more vigor than did its opponents. The prospect of alienating the very people whom the park was to serve was daunting. Nadeau recalled planning Golden Gate National Recreation Area as "a scary prospect."[188]

The situation at Golden Gate National Recreation Area almost guaranteed conflict and potentially could become one of the worst examples of public antipathy for the Park Service and its plans. Not only did every part of the park hold prior uses and constituencies that sought to protect existing prerogatives, the park's establishment depended on local activism. Some Bay Area residents had a proprietary feeling about the park and they did not always agree with one another. Even worse, the park was a "national recreation area," largely without boundary signs or markers, located in an urban area. It was easy to overlook its national status, and Bay Area residents did not defer to park managers the way they might have at Yosemite or Yellowstone. Whalen and Nadeau clearly recognized that standard agency practice simply would not work. If the Park Service proceeded as it did in remote national parks, the community-park bonds necessary to success in the Bay Area would certainly become frayed. A new strategy was essential.[189]

The essence of the system was public participation. In a step that was new in Park Service history, Nadeau and Treabess were "assigned to live with the project they are planning," wrote Anne Hanley in *Westways*, the monthly magazine of the Automobile Club of Southern California, "and for yet another first, the planners have no plans." Recent University of California, Berkeley graduates with passion in their hearts for public involvement, Greg Moore, who later became the Golden Gate National Park Association Executive Director, and Rolf Diamant, who went to become the founding superintendent of Marsh Billings National Historic Site in Connecticut, contributed in significant ways to the program. The planners were committed to listening to the park's constituencies for nearly a full year before they began to

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[187] William J. Whalen, interview by Sara Conklin, March 27, 1993, GGNRA Oral History Interview; Nadeau to Haller, January 23, 2002.

[188] Doug Nadeau, "Points of View," Landscape Architecture 76:6 (1986), 72; Foresta, *America's National Parks and Their Keepers*, 68-73; Rothman, *The Greening of a Nation?*, 58-63.

[189] Whalen interview, March 27, 1993; Nadeau interview, October 6, 1998.

develop plans for the park. In a two-stage process of collecting information, which began with more than 100 workshops and continued with focus groups, the boundaries of park management at Golden Gate National Recreation Area began to become clear. Before completion, the park undertook more than 400 workshops and meetings, easily the most comprehensive planning ever accomplished by the Park Service. The million-dollar process was "extensive, intensive, and effective," Nadeau wrote many years later, but it was more than worth the investment. The planners found out that many of the diverse constituencies for the park shared objectives. Instead of the typical park amenities the planners expected urban constituencies to request—baseball fields and basketball courts—the low income and minority neighborhoods sought the same park attributes as their more upscale neighbors. "Just give us a way to get there," one African American group in the East Bay told the park planners, pointing to the transportation difficulties of the Bay Area as a obstacle to wider participation in the park. This information alone suggested that listening widely was the best strategy.[190]

By the time work on the GMP began, Golden Gate National Recreation Area had already faced a significant number of contentious issues that shaped the planning process. Because the park was carved from an existing community with a range of established uses, there was little leeway for the planners. Much of the public and especially people who used the areas included in the park did not always regard the larger area as a national park and failed to ascribe to it the purposes so important to park planning. As they addressed issues, ongoing situations affected their ability to lead. Nearly every constituency that surrounded the park regarded its issues as paramount. As a result, planning took place in a malleable and complicated environment. Instantaneously assembling the range of planning and management documents that laid an institutional basis for decision making was impossible. Park managers had to develop the mechanisms to set priorities. In a setting with numerous loud and powerful special interests, this guaranteed a decade of de facto, ad hoc planning. Until the planning process was complete, Golden Gate National Recreation Area reacted to the demands of outside constituencies, making policy based in experience more than foresight.

The pattern of local activism and powerful influence predated the park. Even before Golden Gate National Recreation Area was established, regional transportation planners proposed the Golden Gate Parkway, which would have covered the urban coast with roads and impinged on the plans for the park. PFGGNRA, the lead public organization in the struggle to create the park, loudly opposed the project, arguing that the Parkway proposal protected the "divine right of automobiles" rather than the interests of the recreational public. New to town and with only the regional office at the time, the NPS was largely silent during this debate. It depended on support organizations to voice opposition. Even after the establishment of the park, the Park Service moved tentatively. Still feeling its way in a maze of competing and powerful interests, the agency could not risk taking a firm position that might alienate segments of the public. In effect, the Park Service allowed its support groups to fight these battles until its leaders understood the local context more clearly. The advantage was that the agency did not run afoul of powerful local constituencies. The disadvantage came from letting private organizations and advocacy groups represent the agency's perspective.[191]

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[190] Nadeau, "Points of View," 72; Anne Hanley, "Golden Gate's Grass Roots," *Westways* 67 n. 3 (March 1975): 38-41; Nadeau to Haller, January 23, 2002.

[191] Ray Murray, July 8, 1993, GGNRA Oral History Interview, unedited transcript, 23.

Managing visitors' demands revealed another of the shortcomings of a lack of prepared planning. Listening to the needs of the public offered solid management ideas, but while planners tried to sort out the needs and demands, parts of the park were inundated with visitors. Already a symbol and the primary destination within the park for out-of-town visitors, Alcatraz Island became a primary example of the need for planning. The Park Service inherited a complex scenario. The recent Indians of All Tribes Inc. occupation and the disintegrating facilities made the island a risk to visitors, but people clamored to see it. Whalen initially regarded the island as a liability, but the widespread interest in the island, mostly as a prison, but also as a response to the occupation, demanded an agency response. Prior to formal planning, the approach was haphazard. The agency lacked plans and sought ideas. In October 1973, Alcatraz opened under NPS management. Whalen had two objectives for the move. He wanted to show that the Park Service was "doing something," he later recalled, and he sought to gauge public interest. It overwhelmed the park. A press tour prior to the opening took more than 200 people to the island. Whalen spent weeks doing radio interviews across the nation. The opening of Alcatraz headlined the newspapers as far away as London, England.[192] The island possessed genuine cultural significance.

This forced an array of management decisions. The park determined to manage Alcatraz Island "like a ruin," Whalen recalled, treating it as a relic of an earlier era. The decision preserved the character of the island, but the condition of facilities there posed problems. Crumbling buildings were dangerous. The deteriorating condition of many structures charmed visitors but created significant risk of injury. Visitors also had an impact on the island. Heavy public interest had to be taken into account as well. Without a plan for the island, decision-making resulted from an ad hoc process. In 1973 and 1974, visitors who traveled with the guided ranger tours were told to write the superintendent with suggestions for ways to use the island. Even with a plethora of historic resource studies and historic structure reports, the request for suggestions, a typical Park Service strategy, looked to some as evidence of disarray.

By the time Nadeau and the planning team formulated its initial ideas, Whalen's staff at Golden Gate National Recreation Area was ready to proceed beyond reactive administration. A sense of crisis permeated the early years at the park. Staff members always seemed to be reacting to outside influences, and lacking a blueprint for management and experience in complicated local politics, the Park Service seemed alternately tame and reactive. The only antidote to the situation was to formulate a strategy with specific objectives and goals that park personnel could rely on to stave off the demands of the broad array of constituencies. The document that resulted from the planning process, the Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore General Management Plan (GMP) of 1980, reflected the ongoing joint planning of the two parks that persisted even after their administrations diverged and set forward a plan with specific goals to underpin decision making. The plan's debut marked an important watershed in park history. After the GMP, the agency proceeded with a set of guidelines, a proactive strategy rather than a loosely connected set of responses to circumstances. After nearly a decade in the Bay Area, the GMP gave Golden Gate National Recreation Area a map of its objectives, a rationale for its decisions, and a strategy for approaching the future. Ideally, it meant that the agency could now exercise a greater degree of control over the park's destiny.

The GMP resulted from more than a decade of initiatives that began with the effort to establish the park. In the early 1970s, PFGGNRA offered its "Master Plan" for the proposed park. Essentially an inventory to promote the idea of the park, the document was an early attempt

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[192] Whalen interview, March 27, 1993.

at planning Golden Gate National Recreation Area. After the NPS conceptual plan and Nadeau's arrival, a series of studies designed to underpin a general management plan were under way. Because of the remarkable diversity of the park, the range of preparatory documents created between 1969, when conceptualization of the park began, and 1979 was vast. These included the February 1976 "Golden Gate National Recreation Area South Unit, Park Alternatives," and the March 1976 "Golden Gate National Recreation Area Muir Woods, Fort Point, Point Reyes, Management Consultation Report," both authored by the firm of Royston, Hanamoto, Beck, and Abey; the "Golden Gate, Point Reyes, Assessment of Alternatives," an in-agency document released in May 1977; and finally the draft "Golden Gate, Point Reyes, General Management Plan, Environmental Analysis," in June 1979. The documents were all subject to public comment and review, and the comments were used to develop further planning.

The final *Golden Gate Point Reyes General Management Plan*, approved in September 1980, was one of the most comprehensive plans ever enacted by the Park Service. The process of listening to the public yielded tremendously valuable information. Even as public hearings dragged on past the time the agency allotted, park staff were sanguine. They recognized that the time spent in the process allowed them to digest the information they acquired and shape it in meaningful ways. The political minefield of a changing Bay Area lent that patience even greater significance. Not only did the plan's environmental analysis fulfill the dictates of the National Environmental Policy Act, the management plan assessed available options and laid the plans for implementation of policies that would produce viable and widely shared objectives. "GGNRA/ Point Reyes is many parks," the plan read, and this acknowledgment was a significant concession to the difficulty of managing Golden Gate National Recreation Area.[193]

One of the most daunting tasks in planning the park was assessing the remarkable range of resources it contained. Golden Gate National Recreation Area was so diverse that its land had to be divided into categories before ongoing management could begin. A zoning scheme created different land classifications, called land management zones, within the park. This recognition of the differences between the park's many resources enabled decentralized management to take shape. The idea of zones in the park came from NPS precedent. The agency often created zones within park areas to further management goals, but at Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the idea had very different implications. Semi-autonomous park units remained within the park and the diversity of resources required many management strategies. Decentralized management seemed the only real alternative. It offered many advantages but it could lead to a fracturing of the conceptualization of Golden Gate National Recreation Area as one park.

The GMP made an effort to define the park's land by its use. The land management zones it formed included one category called "intensive management zones," divided into three subcategories: natural resources zones, historic resource zones, and special-use zones. The natural resource zones were subdivided into two subcategories, a Natural Appearance Subzone that included Ocean Beach, Fort Funston, Lands End, and Baker Beach, and an Urban Landscape Subzone including Crissy Field, West Fort Mason, the Fort Baker waterfront, the Fort Baker parade ground and the developed area at Stinson Beach. A Pastoral Landscape Management Zone containing the northern Olema Valley and the northern Point Reyes Peninsula comprised another subheading. A Natural Landscape Management Zone, including the Marin Headlands, the southern Olema Valley and a few areas in Point Reyes National Seashore, further subdivided the park. The natural resource category included Special Protection Zones, designated wilderness

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[193] *General Management Plan and Environmental Analysis, Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore, September 1980* (San Francisco: National Park Service, 1980), 23.

and other lands that had received legislative or special administrative recognition of exceptional values. These included a wilderness subzone in Point Reyes National Seashore, a national monument subzone at Muir Woods, a Marine Reserves Subzone at Point Reyes and Limantour Estero, and a Biotic Sensitivity Subzone comprised of shoreline and stream courses. Historic Resource Zones included a Preservation Zone, an Enhancement Zone, an Adaptive Use Zone, and a Special Use Zone. The Preservation Zone included Fort Point, the historic buildings on Alcatraz Island, the historic ships, lighthouses, and fortifications under agency administration, and other historic structures. The Enhancement Zone included the Sutro Baths, Sutro Heights, Cliff House, and Aquatic Park, all originally used for recreational purposes. The Adaptive Use Zone included structures and spaces of historic value that were slated for recreational use or park management. The grounds at Alcatraz Island, most of Fort Mason, East Fort Miley, and parts of the Marin Headlands fell into this grouping. The Special Use Zone comprised lands within the boundaries of the two parks that belonged to other entities, public or private, and that the Park Service did not foresee managing in the immediate future.[194]

In one important step, the Park Service solved a major problem at Golden Gate National Recreation Area. In any situation, the park's diversity of resources drew attention away from comprehensive solutions to the questions of management. Faced with trying to manage historic buildings, urban populations, wilderness and other undeveloped rural land, historic ships, and a whole host of other resources, agency officials tended to compartmentalize issues and treat them in discrete ways. The Land Management Zones simultaneously allowed managers to think about solutions to localized problems while forcing them to regard their actions as interrelated pieces of a larger puzzle. After the publication of the plan, many could see the park as a whole rather than a series of parts. Although planners such as Nadeau worried that no park manager ever took the document seriously, the division into land management zones was an essential precursor to comprehensive, integrated administration.[195]

The GMP also laid out plans for development of facilities at Golden Gate National Recreation Area. The park contained eleven major development areas, six of which were former military sites. Eight of the eleven were clustered around the park in San Francisco; the other three were located in Marin County. In particular, the military areas were popular with the public. They were also in serious disrepair. Alcatraz Island, Fort Mason, Crissy Field, Fort Baker, and Rodeo Valley required extensive restoration and adaptation to recreational use. Aquatic Park and Cliff House also needed extensive care, and other areas of the park, including Muir Woods and Stinson Beach were also slated for improvement. The plan recognized that Alcatraz offered a spectacular view of San Francisco Bay that visitors would continue to crave. Historic preservation and restoration of the island's park-like qualities became the priorities for Alcatraz Island. The agency projected Aquatic Park as an interpretive lens through which to experience San Francisco's waterfront. [196]

Transportation became a crucial issue in shaping the future of Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Golden Gate National Recreation Area had been established after the much-touted "Freeway Revolt" that not only preserved the character of numerous Bay Area

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[194] *General Management Plan and Environmental Analysis, Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore, September 1980*, 15-20; Godino, "Changing Tides at the Golden Gate," 34-38.

[195] Nadeau to Haller, January 23, 2002.

[196] John A. Martini, *Fortress Alcatraz: Guardian of the Golden Gate* (Kailua, HI: Pacific Monograph, 1990); Godino, "Changing Tides at the Golden Gate," 32-34; Hart, *San Francisco's Wilderness Next Door*, 107-9.

neighborhoods, but also set the stage for the awful traffic for which the Bay Area was renowned. While Golden Gate National Recreation Area was an integral part of the city, its ability to limit the impact of traffic was minimal. The quality of visitor experience depended on being able to reach the park and its resources, and the combination of Bay Area travel patterns, especially commuter traffic, and the demands of the public to use the park required intensive attention. Beginning with the Golden Gate Recreational Travel Study in 1976, the Park Service devoted much of its planning initiative to finding out what the public sought both in terms of access and for transportation within the park. The Golden Gate Recreational Travel Study was a unique requirement of the park's enabling legislation and demanded a huge investment of staff time throughout a five-year period. A multi-agency collaboration with a major public involvement component that required extensive personal attention from the superintendent and the planning staff, the study was one of the first in the country to focus solely on the requirements for access to a recreational destination. The undertaking of the study and its findings had a major impact on the General Management Plan as well as on the park's initial attempts to establish and nurture positive community relations.[197]

Park officials were sanguine about the limitations of their policies. They recognized that park decisions were only a small piece of a much larger question and that successful mitigation of questions of transportation depended on a greater degree of cooperation than existed among the many local, county, state, and federal players. The predictable but fundamentally antisocial American attitude about cars—a sentiment the report termed "I want to drive there, but everyone else should take the bus"—also made planning transportation more difficult. The uncertainties of modes of transportation in the aftermath of the 1973 OPEC oil embargo and the dramatic jump in gasoline prices in 1978 and 1979 also affected planning. Decisions made when gasoline was inexpensive might not be relevant in a climate during which fuel costs pushed people toward public transportation. The constraints they faced suggested to the park officials that transportation was likely to become the most frequently revisited dimension of the planning process.[198]

The Park Service approached transportation with an eye to both long- and short-term solutions. During the early 1980s, the agency expected that it could improve transit service to the park, provide transportation within the park, expand ferry service to Marin County and create a Marin Headlands staging area with parking for as many as 700 vehicles, improve automobile access and parking capacity throughout the park, offer transit service to relieve congestion at Cliff House, Stinson Beach, and other overcrowded areas, and promote the new transportation options to the public. Most of the short-term goals could be accomplished by the Park Service alone, with minimal need for cooperation with other government and nongovernmental agencies. Longer term considerations posited wider involvement in transportation and looked at regional solutions to the problems vexing the Bay Area. The Park Service role in these circumstances was focused but crucial. The park seemed to sit directly in the path of the onslaught of commuter and local traffic, and its resource management concerns had already become a critical factor in local planning. By 1980, the transportation problems of the Bay Area clearly required significant

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[197] William Issel, "'Land Values, Human Values, and the Preservation of the City's Treasured Appearance': Environmentalism, Politics, and the San Francisco Freeway Revolt," *Pacific Historical Review* 68 n. 4 (November 1999): 61-77; Nadeau to Haller, January 23, 2002.

[198] *General Management Plan and Environmental Analysis, Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore, September 1980*, 69-70.

regional involvement and cooperation. For the park, the water ferry system was a primary concern, as was expanded shuttle service and remote staging areas for park visitors. If the park could keep some of the vehicles that visitors brought to it outside park boundaries, it could certainly improve the quality of visitor experience within park boundaries.[199]

Cultural resources presented another challenge for park managers. Golden Gate National Recreation Area possessed an amazing array of cultural resources that represented prehistory and more than 200 years of recorded human history and included themes such as the history of Spanish California, American westward expansion, and the Gold Rush of 1849. Its structures illustrated a number of American wars, and revealed military history and architecture, agriculture, commerce, transportation, and natural disasters. Military forts and fortifications, the crumbling prison on Alcatraz Island, old ranches, century-old recreational facilities, lighthouses, and archaeological resources beneath the park all contributed to this compendium of human experience along the Pacific Ocean.[200]

The park's cultural resource management strategy consisted of preservation and adaptive restoration. In 1980, the park contained 410 historic structures, a number far in excess of most national parks, and guided by Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the park embraced a complicated, time-consuming, and expensive cultural resources management mission. Many historic structures were decaying, forcing the park to develop a plan to first protect and preserve, and then determine viable use. Stabilization to slow and stop decay provided one primary means of achieving this end, as did "mothballing," in essence protecting the structure by halting activity in and around it. The prison and fortifications on Alcatraz Island offered a location to implement preservation strategy, as did the historic ships at Aquatic Park, the artillery batteries and fire control stations throughout the park, outbuildings in the Olema Valley, and various archaeological sites scattered through the park. These places could be held in time for the benefit of the visitor and the resource. Another important local need that the park had to fulfill was the demand for usable public space. The cost of property in San Francisco had become astronomical, a real burden for low-income people, small businesses, and any other renters. Adaptive reuse, a strategy that preserved historic fabric as well as the qualities that gave a place historic significance, but accommodated modern needs, offered another means of managing cultural resources. A significant number of historic properties in the park were in use or slated to be used to house a range of cultural activities from community program space to hostels. Although most code requirements were not strictly fulfilled prior to the GMP, turning historic structures into usable 1980s space required a significant investment of capital and thought. Safety codes, structural standards, and disability access all impacted adaptive reuse, often raising the cost of such renovation, but the inclusion of the idea in the GMP gave planners and managers considerable leeway in managing the enormous number of structures in the park.[201]

Adaptive reuse had limitations, but conceptually it made the most sense in Golden Gate National Recreation Area. This strategy did not require complete historical restoration. Instead it suggested a historic mise-en-scène, a retention of the historic fabric to achieve a feeling of the

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[199] Ibid., 72-84.

[200] Ibid., 85-88; Nadeau to Haller, January 23, 2002.

[201] *General Management Plan and Environmental Analysis, Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore, September 1980*, 88- 91.

past in the structures, while renovations allowed the structures to accommodate new uses and constituencies, such as disabled people, that historic structures often inadvertently exclude. Actual restoration of every historic structure in the park was neither economically feasible nor necessarily desirable. Some of the buildings posed management problems; rubble and the remains of older utility systems dotted many locations. Leaving such places alone or restoring them to a historic time period served fewer purposes than either sealing them off from visitors or converting the useable areas into visitor space. Although the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and Park Service policy governed such situations, the law did not require restoration or preservation. It only assured documentation of historic properties before destruction. Park Service policy heartily encouraged adaptive reuse, permitting many structures to be saved that might otherwise have been demolished. In most places, use of the strategy turned on questions of visitor need as well as the most efficacious use of historic properties.

Natural resource management in the GMP reflected more than fifteen years of NPS emphasis on ecology and the relative ease of making natural resource policy at Golden Gate National Recreation Area. It described objectives and management goals in clear precise terms, looked broadly at the impacts of various decisions, and suggested a number of necessary future studies. A Vegetation Management Plan topped the list of needs, followed by a grazing plan and a shoreline management program. The plan also recognized the need for an endangered species management program.

The plan for management for natural resources had as its basis the protection of the native environment whenever possible. The southern section in San Francisco, including resources at Ocean Beach, Fort Funston, East and West Fort Miley, Lands End, and Baker Beach was to be maintained in their natural setting. The wooded areas from the Golden Gate Bridge to the south were slated for protection and the dunes and the rest of the ocean environment were to be restored wherever possible. Crissy Field, Fort Mason, Aquatic Park, Sutro Heights, and Alcatraz were designated as urban park settings, allowing historic values to pay a larger role than in areas designated to be natural settings. This decision created de facto recreational use and ecological zones within the San Francisco section of the park. Among the recommendations for historic management, Sutro Heights Park was to be restored and Crissy Field was to be reseeded and planted with trees. In Marin County, natural values again took precedence. South of the Olema Valley, a zone in which the maintenance of the ecological features such as coastal environments and grasslands predominated was established, and at Muir Woods, the stunning redwoods remained the focus of management. North of the Olema Valley, an emphasis on the rural past and the dairy industry led to a strategy to preserve the balance between woodland and grass. At Golden Gate National Recreation Area, the natural setting was part and parcel of cultural uses of the land, a fine combination as the Park Service began to recognize and interpret the concept of cultural landscapes.

At Golden Gate National Recreation Area, natural resource management more readily lent itself to this structured approach. A powerful local constituency supported natural resource activities, providing the Park Service with outspoken and influential supporters. Its issues were clear and at least similar; they changed with the ecology of the various segments of the park and as a result of prior human use of the lands in question. The problems that natural resource managers faced included the invasion of exotic and sometimes noxious species, human impact on land, and the ecological consequences of development. Natural resource management questions were familiar to the Park Service, compatible with park goals, and readily focused,

making the evolution of natural resource planning an easier process than nearly any other area of park management.

By the end of 1979, when the General Management Plan had begun to circulate, Golden Gate National Recreation Area had become a model for national parks in urban areas. Its diverse resources catered to many publics in countless ways, and its location forced it into the difficult realm of local and regional politics. With the approval of the General Management Plan in September 1980, the park completed its move from reactive to proactive planning. Its needs were clearly defined. Following the initiation of the subsequent cultural resource management plan, approved in 1982, and the natural resource management plan, a draft of which circulated in 1981 and approved in 1987, park staff had the management tools necessary to develop its programs and procedures and a clear idea of the issues the many constituencies of the park felt were critical. A plethora of area- and issue-specific plans followed throughout the 1980s and 1990s, each tied to goals established in the GMP. Many of these addressed ongoing themes and problems that special interests brought to the table time and again, and the Park Service continually sought to find consensus. [202]

The approval of the General Management Plan changed the way the Park Service responded to public suggestions concerning the use of the park. Before the plan, Golden Gate National Recreation Area operated on a case-by-case basis. Park staff responded to queries, requests, and demands on an individual basis. Each event was treated separately, in an ad hoc manner. By 1976, the park developed clear responses, but until the plan, lacked the documentation—and the sense of clear goals that stemmed from it—that such a document provided. After the plan, the agency had clearly established priorities and reasons that it could use to buttress its claims in the competitive environment in the Bay Area. Managing by program and directive firmed up agency objectives and provided rationale for opposing outside plans for parkland and resources. In the Bay Area, there were no shortage of proposals that affected the park.

The park's subsequent land use planning decisions always attempted to reference the general prescriptions of the GMP—or were "tiered off" from them, as the planners would say. Among the major efforts were the delicate process of balancing agricultural interests with the cause of wetlands restoration at Giacomini Ranch near Point Reyes Station; the contentious but "interesting" planning for visitor use at Sweeny Ridge, where the community had somewhat unrealistic expectations of commercial benefit from a national park; Aquatic Park, where the park's initiative adjacent to Fisherman's Wharf helped it to become established as a player in the region; and the decades-long struggle to achieve a balance of nature, history and recreation at Crissy Field. [203]

But the first test of the GMP and the power such a management directive contained came in 1982. Veterans Administration officials decided to build a two-story parking garage at Fort Miley and needed six acres of National Park Service land for the project. Fort Miley had been part of the genesis of Golden Gate National Recreation Area; it had been the proposal to build a national archives facility there that ignited Amy Meyer and led to the founding of PFGGNRA. A

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[202] R. Patrick Christopher, James P. Delgado, and Martin T. Mayer, *Cultural Resources Management Plan, Golden Gate National Recreation Area* (San Francisco: Golden Gate National Recreation Area, 1982); Judd A. Howell, *Final Natural Resources Management Plan and Environmental Assessment* (San Francisco: Golden Gate National Recreation Area, 1987); for a timeline that includes planning efforts through 1996, see the Chronology in the Appendix.

[203] Nadeau to Haller, January 23, 2002.

decade later, the commitment to the neighborhood and what longtime San Francisco civic leader John Jacobs called its "nearly pristine" character, remained powerful. Reflecting the tendencies of the time, response to the proposal was uniformly negative. The Park Service took a public stand against a project of another agency for one of the first times in the history of Golden Gate National Recreation Area. Pointing to the GMP, William Whalen, back at Golden Gate National Recreation Area after serving as director of the National Park Service, promised the Outer Clement Neighborhood Association that the land in question would be turned "from parking into parkland." Whalen was able to keep his promise. Congress terminated the proposal in 1984.

Alcatraz Island became a focal point for the implementation of the GMP. Because of its popularity, Alcatraz required much of the park's energy. It consistently drew people, attracted filmmakers, and more than any other part of the park captured a place in the public imagination, in the process making prodigious demand on park staff and priorities. Alcatraz demanded planning from the moment the NPS assumed responsibility for the island. The Indian Occupation left debris scattered across the island, and transforming the old prison into a visitor site required considerable ingenuity. The island, Ron Treabess remarked in a phone conversation with PFGGNRA's Amy Meyer in 1973, was "in a sad state of disrepair." The public clamored to visit the island and the Park Service sought to accommodate them. Within months of park establishment, staff members at Golden Gate National Recreation Area prepared an interim management plan and a transportation concession prospectus to offer boat service to the island. Both documents were preliminary in their nature; both illustrated the problems of managing a place that attracted the public before a full-scale planning process had begun.[204]

When the island opened to visitors at the end of 1973, nothing prepared the Park Service for the intensity of demand. Park planners expected tours of the island to lay its image as America's Devil's Island to rest and quench the public's interest in The Rock; within a few years, they anticipated, demand would level off. Within weeks of the beginning of ticket sales, the Park Service recognized that it clearly underestimated the public's interest. Tours sold out months in advance and a ticket on the Alcatraz ferry was one of hottest items in the Bay Area.[205] Only the firm control of arrival and departure gave the Park Service the opportunity to manage visitor flow and minimize severe impact on the cultural resources of the island.

During the next few years, the Park Service reassessed its initial plans for management of Alcatraz and sought to develop a consensus with other affected entities. In the context of the planning process that was to shape the entire future of the park, the agency encouraged public input to accompany its plans. In May 1977, the park debuted its *Assessment of Alternatives for the General Management Plan, May 1977: Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Point Reyes National Seashore*. The assessment offered three different scenarios for Alcatraz. The first would clean up the rubble and leave the historic buildings intact; the second proposed removing all but key historic structures and landscaping the remaining open space, and the third recommended stabilizing historic structures and offering self-guided tours and other educational programs.[206]

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[204] Herman Allcock, David Ames, Lynn Herring, Steve Leding, Ed Pilley, and Ron Treabess, "Alcatraz Island: Interim Management Plan, February 1973," Golden Gate National Recreation Area Archives, HDC no. 409, File 116; "Proposed Transportation Concession Prospectus, Alcatraz Island," PFGGNRA I, Box 2, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Sites: Alcatraz – Transportation; PFGGNRA memo, "Alcatraz – Ron Treabus [*sic*]," ca. June 15, 1973, PFGGNRA I, Box 2, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Sites: Alcatraz – Transportation.

[205] PFGGNRA memo, "Alcatraz – Ron Treabus [*sic*]."

[206] *Assessment of Alternatives for the General Management Plan, May 1977: Golden Gate National Recreation*

As a visitor destination, Alcatraz Island offered many management advantages. Most importantly, the Park Service could limit the number of visitors and control ingress and egress. No one could simply drive up to the island and walk in. Everyone—or nearly everyone—had to purchase passage on a concessionaire's ferry, and initially, uniformed rangers gave guided tours to groups of twenty-five visitors or less. The guided tours were essential in the Park Service's initial scheme. Tours prevented injury in the sometimes dangerous and always crumbling structures on the island and they assured that visitors did not damage the facilities. Initial plans also limited the number of visitors on the island to fifty at a time, a number that quickly proved impossibly low. As demand increased, so did the visitor numbers and this stricture became impossible to observe.[207]

By the late 1970s, the growth in demand required reevaluation of the policies for the island. Alcatraz was a difficult place to work. Interpreters often experienced burnout, the facilities were inundated, and although the ranger-guided tours were widely acclaimed, they drained not only staff members but park resources. Low morale that resulted from a combination of harsh weather and limited amenities plagued the Alcatroopers, as they labeled themselves, and turnover was high. Nor was a guided tour for every visitor feasible. By the late 1970s, the labor-intensive operations that had been the hallmark of the United States economy before 1970 had become expensive and unwieldy, and at Alcatraz, park staff needed to rethink management strategies. In an assessment of alternatives in May 1977, the Park Service presented the many audiences of the park with possibilities. The agency could clean up rubble and leave existing buildings intact, remove all but the key buildings and landscape the rest of the island, or stabilize the historic structures and feature self-guided tours and other programming opportunities. The third alternative became policy.[208] Clearly changes were imminent at Alcatraz.

The transformation from ranger-guided to self-guided tours required nearly a decade to complete. In 1978, the agency approved a development concept for the island, and soon after, a structural safety study. In the 1980 GMP, historic preservation remained the key goal at Alcatraz, but the Park Service committed itself to creating a "pleasant landscaped setting" to which the "stark prison and military structures will stand in honest contrast." But with "twice the visitors and half the rangers," as one staff member described the situation to a reporter, the island was beginning to become a different place, one that had to be managed as clearly for visitors as for preservation purposes. As demand increased, the agency catered to visitors in new ways.[209]

In 1985, the new policy was finally implemented. Visitors were no longer restricted to tours led by rangers, instead experiencing what one reporter, Judy Field of the *Salinas*

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*Area, Point Reyes National Seashore* (San Francisco: Golden Gate National Recreation Area, 1977).

[207] Allcock, Ames, Herring, Leding, Pilley, and Treabess, "Alcatraz Island: Interim Management Plan, February 1973," 6.

[208] "Assessment of Alternatives, May 1977,"; Rai Okamoto to City Planning Commission, November 17, 1977, PFGGNRA I, Box 10, San Francisco Govt – Dept. of City Planning.

[209] Golden Gate National Recreation Area/Point Reyes National Seashore, "Alcatraz Development Concept," (San Francisco: Golden Gate National Recreation Area, 1978); National Park Service Denver Service Center and Royston, Hanamoto, Beck & Abey, Engineers, "Structural Safety Hazard Study, Alcatraz Island, July 1, 1979" San Francisco: Golden Gate National Recreation Area) HDC no. 409, File 154; *General Management Plan and Environmental Analysis, Golden Gate National Recreation Area and Point Reyes National Seashore, September 1980*, 37; Leslie Aun, "On the Rock: Park Service Staging Alcatraz Escape – From Extinction," *Federal Times* February 1, 1988, 23-5, OCPA, Box 10, "News Clippings – February 1988."

*Californian*, called "free exploration" of the island. Rangers continued to give tours, but visitors could also rent Walkman-style cassette players with an interpretive tape that contained a cell-house tour narrated by a number of people connected to Alcatraz, including former prisoners Jim Quillen and Whitey Thompson. The change in method of interpretation altered the experience of visitors on the island. Roaming with their aural interpretive material, visitors experienced physical freedom and had greater impact on the island and its structures. Their freedom also cost them something. The visitor's tour acquired a new and markedly different feel. At the end of the guided tour, interpretive rangers asked for quiet and then clanged a cell door. The eerie sound reverberated through the crumbling halls of the windswept rock. The awesome quiet spoke for itself, mute testimony to a complicated and intriguing past that thrilled visitors. The self-guided tours changed the special sense of discovery that came with the silence of the guided tours. Delivered on headsets, the talks were excellent, well thought out, informative, and with Quillen's and Thompson's voices telling a personal story, real. The tapes became a favorite of visitors. Crowded together, they jostled each other for position to better hear the words, the recorded "clang" of jailhouse doors, and the silence of the airwaves in their ears. Tuned to their headsets, their "excuse me's" as they maneuvered echoed where silence once awed the public and interpreters alike.[210]

The management advantages of the new program were many and varied, and support for implementation of this new management concept came from Golden Gate National Recreation Area Superintendent Brian O'Neill. Using his connections in the community and his skill as a leader, O'Neill promoted the lessening of visitor control on Alcatraz. Under the new system, the Park Service could accommodate many more visitors and could still maintain some measure of management of their actions. The Alacatroopers offered a mixed response to the new program. Many thought that the headsets offered high-quality interpretation, at least equal to that of live rangers; others saw the new system as a serious decline in the quality of experience. The new program offered one clear advantage: it made work on the island far less difficult. Inclement weather was one of the sources of low morale. Alcatraz was cold, and rangers who gave guided tours spent much of their time outside. Exposure took a heavy toll on park personnel, who were often ill. After visitors were allowed to roam the island without guides, rangers could spend more of their time indoors. Not only did rangers experience better health as a result, it also provided an opportunity for staff to develop other aspects of the island's history.

Clearly the new program was a response to demand, a harbinger of more change. "We're trying to convert Alcatraz from a prison to a park," observed Rich Weideman, the supervisory ranger for Alcatraz, in the clearest description of the program's goal. The development of a management program illustrated a range of previously overlooked resources on the island. As was nearly always the case in the Bay Area, each newly considered resource soon acquired a vocal constituency. The demands for Alcatraz became broader and more varied. The national public saw a prison on the island, a place of memory, history, and myth. After documentation of sea caves and the nesting of Heermann's gulls, local and vocal environmental groups regarded the island as a wildlife refuge.[211] The many demands on the island required further planning as well as more discussion.

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[210] Judy Field, "The Rock: Visitors Have Freer Reign of Alcatraz Island Grounds," *Salinas Californian*, June 9, 1987, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, OCPA, Box 9, "News Clippings – June 1987"; Aun, "On the Rock," 24.

[211] James P. Delgado to File, "Mapping and Documenting Sea – Caves and Other Subterranean Features on

In 1988, the distinguished architect Lawrence Halprin came to the park to help develop Alcatraz as a destination for visitors. The Golden Gate National Parks Association (GGNPA), the park's nonprofit cooperating association, sponsored Halprin's work and the architect brought an impressive track record of community-oriented design. Born in 1916 and a resident of San Francisco since the 1940s, Halprin was widely revered for his attention to the human scale of large design projects and closely associated with the idea of environmental design. One of his prominent projects, Ghirardelli Square on the edge of San Francisco's waterfront, catapulted him to architectural prominence and he continued for more than three decades as one of the nation's leading landscape architects. Among his important projects were the Lovejoy and Auditorium Forecourt Plazas in Portland, Oregon, Freeway Park in Seattle, Washington, the Haas Promenade in Jerusalem, Israel, and later the FDR Memorial in Washington, D.C. Near the end of a long and significant career, Halprin sought to transform Alcatraz Island as he had so many other places.[212]

With funds from GGNPA, Halprin developed a series of new concepts for the island. On-site workshops and other similar mechanisms brought feedback from the public, and Halprin worked these ideas into his vision of Alcatraz. Published by the association, "Alcatraz the Future: A Concept Plan and Guidelines," a development concept plan, envisioned a very different island than existed in the 1980s. Building on a 1984 conception, Halprin's work sought to create an open island, with shoreline walks, overlooks, and picnic areas. The plan also suggested restoring the parade grounds and other public areas. Halprin's island looked more like a nature preserve than a historic prison.[213] Many in the Park Service thought this version of the process of making the prison a park went too far.

The Halprin plan served to announce the emergence of the Golden Gate National Parks Association as an important influence. The association submitted Halprin's plan to the Park Service as an illustration of the goals of two of the park's most important planning documents, the general management plan and the interpretive prospectus. Gregory Moore, director of GGNPA, expressed support for the goals of the park and prepared for "the 'next era' of community participation in the park—when the goals of the General Management Plan are pursued through a program of contributed support." GGNPA saw its role as assisting the park by providing resources; it extended that to offering ideas and programs. After Amy Meyer and the Audubon Society objected to the overdevelopment of Alcatraz that they believed the plan embodied, they pushed for less development. "We – Audubon (Society) and I – threatened the Park Service," Meyer recalled. In the end, the Park Service enacted only the Agave Trail from the "Alcatraz the Future" plan, but the association further established itself as an important asset for the park.[214]

After the Halprin plan, the Park Service worked toward a comprehensive program for Alcatraz Island. In the early 1990s, the island's role as a bird refuge grew in significance to the Park Service, melding natural and cultural resource management. This new emphasis served

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Alcatraz Island," NRMR, H30, Box 4, 1992 Cave Inventory.

212 n.a., "Planning Spaces for People, Not Buildings," *The National Observer*, June 23, 1969; Lawrence Halprin, *Alcatraz: The Future* (San Francisco: Golden Gate National Parks Association, 1988), 3.

213 Halprin, *Alcatraz: The Future*.

214 "Alcatraz Island Plan, First Draft, January 14, 1993," 4-7, NRMR, Box 8, Alcatraz 1994' Meyer interview, February 25, 2002, 15-16.

agency goals. If the Park Service wanted people to pay less attention to the prison and more to other features of the island, programs that focused on other dimensions of the island furthered its end. Following new interest in Heermann's gulls, the predominant western gulls and other species and with growing interest in tide pools on the island, the park put together a new plan, the *Alcatraz Development Concept Plan and Environmental Assessment*, which it unveiled in 1993. The plan was a measure of park's commitment to integrate natural and cultural resource management, and to create a multifaceted plan to manage the various resources of the park. At the same time, it furthered the park's objective of turning Alcatraz from a prison to a park, increasingly reflecting the Park Service's long-standing predisposition for natural resources ahead of cultural resources. In a national recreation area, devoted to public enjoyment, with local sentiment in favor of natural resources and historic preservation valued more highly by out-of-town visitors, that predisposition was strong, even enhanced.[215]

The 1993 plan also let the Park Service set a firm balance between use, history, and nature on the island. In it, the park codified the principle of an open island, a decade after its introduction. The plan gave the birds equal standing with historic resources on the island, a decision that made some cultural resources managers uncomfortable. Yet the Bay Area environmental community was powerful and wide-reaching and the Park Service often bent to its influence. In this case, the park's many mandates coincided in a way that furthered resource protection, albeit some thought at the expense of the primary features of the island. The 1993 Alcatraz plan represented a step toward integrated management.[216]

An important synergy developed between Alcatraz and GGNPA that had powerful implications for park planning and management. According to Rich Weideman, the sales of gifts and souvenirs on Alcatraz facilitated the growth of GGNPA, which in turn created more resources for the park. Alcatraz drove the sales office of the association, Weideman observed, which in turn let GGNPA take a higher profile in park affairs. As the association's coffers filled with revenue from Alcatraz, GGNPA, once a small cadre of enthusiasts, hired countless employees. The association was able to turn over large sums of revenue to the park each year and was able to support Golden Gate National Recreation Area in new and impressive ways.[217] The attraction of Alcatraz Island helped GGNPA attain a significance that far exceeded most other cooperating associations at individual park areas. "There is," Richard Bartke observed, "only mutual support" in the GGNPA-park relationship.[218]

Yet the potential for tension existed with the growing significance of GGNPA and other similar entities throughout the park system. Even though close ties between GGNPA and Golden Gate National Recreation Area helped foster cooperation, GGNPA also could function as another of seemingly infinite constituencies of the park. Under the unique circumstances at Alcatraz, the tension was muted. Weideman, the supervisory ranger at Alcatraz, regarded the park and the

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[215] *Alcatraz Development Concept Plan and Environmental Assessment*, (San Francisco: National Park Service, 1993); Leslie Aun, "On the Rock: Park Service Staging Alcatraz Escape - From Extinction," *Federal Times* February 1, 1988, 23; Sellars, *Preserving Nature in the National Parks*, 1-3.

[216] *Alcatraz Development Concept Plan and Environmental Assessment*, 2-6.

[217] Gregory Moore, interview with Hal Rothman, July 16, 1999; Rich Weideman, interview with Hal Rothman, July 17, 1999.

[218] Bartke to Haller, March 5, 2002.

association as parallel organizations that pursued similar goals in different ways.[219] Since Alcatraz received much of its development money from GGNPA and because visitation on the island remained controlled—the boat trip remained the only way to reach the island although demand compelled the Park Service to exceed the carrying capacity set in the GMP and later the 1993 Alcatraz Plan—and the island required so much stabilization and reconstruction, the partnership worked well. The goals of the Park Service and of the association meshed smoothly at Alcatraz. In other places, such as Marin Headlands, where development and park goals can be antithetical when visitation and development impinge on the preservation of resources, the relationship could become a struggle.

By the early 1990s, Alcatraz provided a precursor to the looming question of the management of the Presidio. On the island, where Weideman, a talented and energetic manager who showed great creativity, remained committed to the idea that increases in use and better protection of habitat were not mutually exclusive, GGNPA influence facilitated both historic preservation and natural protection, both the prison of memory and the preserve. The Presidio clearly demanded something similar, and by the early 1990s just as certainly would involve a public-private management structure. But Alcatraz, with its controlled ingress and egress, may be an exception. Visitors continue to regard the island as a prison and do not feel entitled to go where they choose as they do in other parts of Golden Gate National Recreation Area and at other national park areas. As a result, planners and managers have a freer hand on the island than elsewhere in the park. It is possible to experiment at Alcatraz, and if the program fails, to simply section off that part of the island until the program can be redesigned. In park management, as the new century approached, such control remained a luxury that muted tension and created possibilities.

By the 1990s, planning at Golden Gate National Recreation Area had become an integral part of park management. A decade of preparation led to the General Management Plan, which became the point of departure for future changes. With the GMP in place, the park was able to move from simple reaction to planned response aimed at long-term goals. It could make more detailed plans within an overall context and could consider them without devoting as much time to the broad array of unfeasible proposals that consumed much park time during the first years of the park. In a park surrounded by powerful constituencies, each with not only valid claims to parklands for their purposes, but also significant political influence, planning became the Park Service's defense against the heavy weight of special interests. The commitment to planning and to park goals has often slowed the agency's ability to move forward; it has also protected the park from being overrun by its friends.

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[219] Weideman interview, July 17, 1999.